

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THEALE PARISH MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 22nd MAY 2017 IN THE PETER GOOCH ROOM, THEALE PAVILION,
ENGLEFIELD ROAD, THEALE**

Cllr B. Williams took the chair.

Present: Cllrs. D. Wood, B. Williams, J. Richardson, Z. Fenwick, I. Hopcroft, S. Coker, D. Lye, P. Clifford & Cllr A. Clark (Theale Parish Council), Cllr A. Macro (Theale Parish Council & West Berks District Council), Jo Friend (Clerk to Theale Parish Council), Insp. Chris Ward (Thames Valley Police), Dennis Hayden (Tilehurst Poor Lands Charity) Rev. Ann Templeman (Holy Trinity Church)

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D. Baker.

Cllr Williams opened the meeting by welcoming those present to the Annual Assembly.

2. Minutes of the Annual Assembly of Theale Parish Meeting held on 16th May 2016

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly of Theale Parish Meeting held on 16th May 2016 had been circulated and were approved. Proposed Cllr Fenwick; seconded Cllr Macro.

3. Matters Arising

Cllr Macro gave an update on Item 9 - the highway at Arlington will be 'stopped up' as proposed, in a move aimed at deterring travellers from occupying the site.

4. Report of the Parish Council

Cllr Williams presented a verbal report to the meeting:

Past 12 months have been a busy time for the council. TPC has taken part in a wide range of consultations including major planning applications for both Burghfield Sailing Club and the Thames Water sewage site. Also, the consultation for the proposed new fire station for Theale.

TPC has considered and commented on 65 planning applications, within which there was the potential for over 400 new dwellings. TPC saw an increase in applications related to Arlington Business Park as this continues to be upgraded, plus an increase in change of use from office to residential as a result of new planning legislation. Council representatives sit on various local bodies and committees.

In July, the council was deeply saddened by the passing of Cllr Charles Bateman (chairman of TPC at the time). Charles had given many years' service and commitment to the council and will be greatly missed.

2016/17 saw a by-election and 3 new parish councillors were appointed.

Devolution of services from WBC – this continues and TPC expects it to grow. Parish council working hard with other councils to put together an alternative Neighbourhood Warden scheme, plus it is heavily involved in working with WBC to find a solution to secure the future of Theale library. Thanks go to the councillors and the clerk for putting much effort and many hours into this.

The matter of the proposed new primary school is ongoing. TPC is working hard to find a resolution.

Christmas Lights Switch-On event – for reasons outside the council's control we were unable to hold it this year. Hopefully, with the support of all the councillors and volunteers we will be able to stage it this year.

TPC continue to improve its operations. Website is fully up and running, attracting over 300 hits per month. Council has adopted several new policies and updated its financial regulations.

Chairman would like to congratulate the clerk on achieving her CiLCA qualification. As a result, the council has been able to adopt the new General Power of Competence, one of only a handful of parishes in West Berkshire to qualify.

Councillor Williams proposed that the police report be brought forward in the agenda as Insp. Ward was required elsewhere. It was also requested that the church report be brought forward. All agreed.

5. Thames Valley Police Report

Insp. Chris Ward gave a verbal report. There has been a general increase in crime, mainly in theft from motor vehicles and vehicles stolen. 7 vehicles were stolen during the last year, an increase which could be due to devices being used to re-programme remote locking fobs. Increase in number of criminal damage incidents, this could be linked to the unlawful encampments on Arlington Business Park that occurred during the year.

Cyber crime – 80% of it is preventable by updating security settings, good passwords etc.

Changes in TVP – West Berks is moving to 3 hub model: emergency response, investigative and neighbourhood. There will be a reduction in size of the Neighbourhood team to 6 PCSOs & 3 PC and they will be covering a larger area. Team won't be investigating but will spend more time on problem solving, helping communities to become more resilient, will be working with WBC on this.

NAG remains main source of identifying problems in an area. Can now report incidents via email to Neighbourhood team on TVP's website.

Q – Cllr Macro asked about the increased area for the Neighbourhood team. Insp. Ward explained it now included Calcot & Tilehurst in addition to all of the previous areas.

6. Holy Trinity Church

Revd. Ann Templeman invited everyone to the Ascension Day service on Thursday, the choir will be singing from the tower roof and drinks will be served in the rectory garden beforehand.

Church is still actively fundraising. It wants to install running water and toilets inside plus complete the rest of the path. They are currently employing a part time young persons' worker who is doing good work with the toddler group plus some after school sessions. Funding runs out at the end of August so church would like ideas for where alternative funding can be obtained.

Englefield is requesting a separation from Theale and this looks like it will go ahead despite strong opposition from Holy Trinity. Holy Trinity is very sad about this and the long term result could be that Theale will no longer be able to have a full time vicar. Ann is due to speak before the Bishop's Council on the matter and there will be an opportunity for parishioners to make their views known before the final decision is taken.

7. Charities Reports

Dr Ellerton's Charity

No report provided.

The Tilehurst Poor Lands Charity

Dennis Hayden provided a verbal report:

The purpose of the charity is to provide white goods. It received 61 applications last year and paid out £12,409. The charity wishes to sell its Kentwood Hill land in order to raise income and has made representations to Reading BC in this regard.

8. School Governor's Reports

Theale C of E Primary School

A written report had been provided. Cllr Williams read out a summary.

Theale Green Community School

No report provided.

9. Other Community Reports

Theale Village Hall

Cllr Williams read out the short written report that had been provided.

10. West Berkshire Council's Report

District Councillor Alan Macro provided a verbal report:

Housing Sites Allocation DPD – this was adopted by WBC last week.

Planning – applications are in for the former sewage works site and for Whitehart Meadow, both outside the settlement boundary. In theory, they shouldn't be approved but there have been instances recently where such applications were approved as WBC couldn't adequately demonstrate a 5 year land supply.

Library – the community did well in showing their support for this facility.

Ward Boundary changes – the number of district councillors will be reduced from 52 to 42. The Theale ward will be increased to include other areas, possibly Englefield and/or Tidmarsh & Sulham.

Theale Train Station – nothing will happen on this until 2019. The new ticket office may be brought into use sooner as someone has shown an interest in running a cafe on site.

Tips – residents can no longer use Smallmead so have to travel to Newbury. There is a proposal to expand Padworth to include waste but that has run into problems.

Fire station – proposal to build one at A4/A340 roundabout. Wigmore lane residents have been consulted.

Ikea – the problems seem to have been more in the car park than on the surrounding roads.

Superfast broadband – there is a project to bring this to most properties in WB via a scheme run by Gigaclear. Most of Theale is served by Virgin so not sure how many will be catered for by Gigaclear.

Q – Dennis Hayden asked if there was any update on the planning application for housing on Whitehart Meadow. Cllr Macro said there wasn't.

11. Matters raised by Parishioners

No matters were raised.

The chairman thanked those present for their attendance and the Assembly ended at 8.25pm.